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Review of The Sternberg Fossil Hunters: A Dinosaur Dynasty.

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The Sternberg Fossil Hunters: A Dinosaur Dynasty. By Katherine Rogers. Missoula, Montana: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1991. Foreword, preface, genealogy, prologue, maps, photographs, epilogue, notes, appendix, references, index. xiii + 288 pp. \$10 paper.

Dinosaur! One hundred and fifty years after being coined by Sir Richard Owen, that word still evokes wonder. Every so often, the world seems to enter into a period of dinosaur hysteria. In case you've failed to notice, we're in one now, and it's a whopper. A well-placed dinosaur can sell anything: hamburgers, pencil boxes, movies, and of course, books. But make no mistake, this is not just another book about dinosaurs. It is a classic work about exploration, discovery, and growth.

At a time when existence on the American prairie could hardly be described as "the good life" and most people were justifiably preoccupied with the present, the Sternbergs began a life-long devotion to unearthing the past, the very ancient history of the Plains. As a child, Charles H. Sternberg, the founder of this "dinosaur dynasty," chanced upon a handful of fossil shells and curious rocks. Though he received little encouragement from those around him, a spark began to glow. With that seemingly inauspicious start, his life, and the lives of his future sons Levi, Charles M., and George F., became set in stone. For the next 100 years, their discoveries would delight scientists and museums around the world and provide that same spark of wonder to generations of children.

Charles H. Sternberg produced two fascinating books—*The Life of a Fossil Hunter* (1909) and *Hunting Dinosaurs on the Red Deer River of Alberta, Canada* (1917)—and he and George F. wrote several popular articles. Katherine Rogers quotes liberally from these and numerous other sources, including personal letters and diaries. It is heartening to find the essence of these works preserved so faithfully in this book and made so accessible to the reader. The character of the Sternbergs and the nature of their quest emerge clearly.

For the reader with little interest in fossils or the history of paleontology in North America, this book may be a bit daunting. For the child in all of us, the adventurer, the seeker of lost worlds, for anyone who has felt the thrill of discovering a small fragment of the past beneath his or her feet, however, this saga is a pleasure.

A few errors found their way past the editors (some with quite interesting results) and the use of parenthetical metric equivalents throughout the text is awkward and distracting. But Rogers has combined solid research with a personal knowledge and affection for the Sternbergs and their story to produce a very enjoyable book.

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